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ABSTRACT

Defined in terms of their institutional role and historical development, national statistical libraries are discussed in the context of present structures, size, personnel situation, technical equipment, financial structure, general and specific activities, areas of specialization, and growth rate, as well as the interlibrary cooperative efforts and their connections and integration with literary information systems identified by this survey. Seventy libraries in 126 countries responded to a questionnaire in German, English, and French originated by the West German Federal Statistical Office in compliance with an International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) Administrative Libraries suggestion for a survey, and data were obtained from libraries in Europe (46%), America (33%), Asia (13.5%), and Africa (5.5%). Suggestions are offered for intensified cooperation between national statistical libraries in the areas of title registation and subject matter coverage. (RAA)

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THE LIBRARIES OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL OFFICES IN THE WORLD. COMMENTS ON THE RESULTS OF AN ENQUIRY

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The Libraries of the National Statistical Offices in the world

- Comments on the results of an enquiry -

1. The development of special statistical libraries and their objectives

The libraries of national statistical offices[1] belong to the type of so-called "Special Libraries", a group which still is increasingly gaining in importance.

Actually, it is an idle question to ask who it was who coined the term for this type of library which, as opposed to the "Universal Libraries", is characterized as a rule by a "limited" acquisition policy restricted to a specific area of concentration. Allegedly, it was the German Secretary to the British Prince Consort Albert, a Dr. Karl Meyer, who in connection with the preliminary discussions on the first British "Public Libraries Act" of 1850, that is to say more than a century ago, introduced the term special library as distinct from the term universal library[3]. We want to refrain from further enriching the great number of definitional efforts by adding our own, and rather accede to a definition proposed by UNESCO (or Aslip, respectively), according to which "a special library may be defined as a department/facility responsible for the acquisition, indexing and distribution (dissemination) of recorded knowledge directly concerned with the work of a specialized organization or a special group of users"[4]. With this periphrasis, the original definition is, as far as the ultimate objective is concerned, only being confirmed; for an acquisition policy carried out according to this function-orientated conceptional definition results in a "structure of stocks", the main emphasis of which is accordingly adapted to the specific terms of reference of the "parent organisation". If other criteria of distinction are applied, however, such as the one relating

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to the supporting/responsible agency, then statistical libraries must also be allocated to the group of official government libraries[5], because as a rule - as has been confirmed by our survey - they cannot be regarded as independent units but rather are part of or are attached to official bodies through which they are financed. However, this should not lead to the conclusion that all government-controlled libraries are specialized libraries.

It is not our intention to establish a typological system of libraries; the attempts made in this direction are quite sufficient[6]. Our sole objective rather is to point out that depending on the standards and/or considerations applied, it is often not possible to classify libraries in a completely unequivocal manner which however is also of secondary importance as far as our presentation is concerned. The fact which remains is that the term "national statistical libraries" refers to libraries of statistical central offices or - in the case of a decentralized organisation of official statistics - to the libraries of those institutions which take care of the central tasks of official statistics (compare f.i. Great Britain). These libraries belong to both the category of "special libraries", because their acquisition activities are orientated towards specialized literature, i.e. statistics, and to the category of "official government libraries", because they are financed by "public authorities" (supporting or responsible agency) and also receive their "directives" from them.

Since the categorization of libraries, their allocation to a specific type of library, is deduced from their tasks and objectives, it must be pointed out that statistical libraries are in general also depository libraries, because they for instance function as "depositories" for government publications, mostly those published by the agency to which they belong. Often they are also archival libraries, because they are used inter alia for preserving historical documents such as public records

or original statistical material. Last but not least, they also are scientific libraries, inasmuch as their stocks are used primarily for scientific research. The most recent trends moreover indicate that the statistical libraries are slowly developing into documentation and information centres.

It was as early as the beginning of the 18th century that the first establishments of this new category of "specialized" libraries made their appearance. This was a direct result of the stormy expansion of scientific activities which at that time had set in on the basis of a new understanding of science. The triumphal procession of the modern sciences, especially in the field of the natural sciences, not only led to a new, more profound method of questioning, but also to a steadily increasing - and even today not yet concluded - process of specialization, and with it to the establishment of new scientific fields of study. New teaching and research institutions which came into being as a result of this development, also made it necessary to create new, scientifically adequate, types of libraries, i.e. special libraries, which also could serve those research institutions of the economic branches which aspired to convert the results of the findings forwarded mainly by the natural sciences into practical economic utilization.

Thus, as early as 1707, the "Technische Bibliothek" (Technical Library) was established in Prague (today known as the Central Technical Library), followed in 1735 by the "Kommerzbibliothek" (Commercial Library) in Hamburg. Also the Senckenberg Library, founded in 1763 in Frankfurt on Main as a special library in the field of natural science, can look back on a history of over two hundred years. Another institution which can also trace its roots back to the 18th century is the Library of the British Foreign Office.

One of the new scientific disciplines which came into being during the above described period of development is modern statistics, the main roots of which, namely the theory of probability, developed towards the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century. Names like Bernoulli,

Laplace, Gauss, Poisson, Süssmilch, Quetelet, Galton, Person and others belonged to the first generation of researchers in this new scientific field of study. Their work was a co-determinating factor for the establishment of "Statistical Offices". Whatever names these establishments were given in the particular instances (Commission, Office, etc.), their existence formed the basis for the development of that type of library which is the subject of our review: the (national) special statistical libraries. The first of these special statistical libraries made their appearance during the first half of the 19th century. The oldest of these institutions was most likely the Library of the former Land Statistical Office of Prussia, which was established in 1810, not later than five years after this Office itself was founded. It was followed in 1829 by the Library of the Central Statistical Office of Austria. In 1841, the Library of the Central Statistical Office of Belgium was established as a result of the direct initiative of the already mentioned and famous statistician Quetelet. The libraries of the Swedish (1840) and of the Danish (1849) statistical offices, as well as the libraries of some British authorities which were responsible for specific central statistical objectives (e.g. the Library of the Board of Trade (1843) and the Library of the General Register Office (1837)[7], also commenced operating in the first half of the last century. These newly established special libraries were - in comparison to the universal libraries - as a rule characterized not only by the already mentioned different structure of stocks but also by a more penetrating, more specific degree of coverage and, concomitantly, by an earlier orientation towards more modern, documentation-specific technologies as well as by administrative procedures which were more adequate to the tasks involved.

There cannot be any doubt that with respect to those special libraries which are a part of a larger organisational unit - as f.i. the administration of a parliament, a ministry, or of some other authority or even of an economic enterprise - ,the requirements of the users have to be met to a much higher degree at all levels and operational procedures of library administration than

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this is the case with non-specialized libraries. This however is only being mentioned as a mere fact, not necessarily as an advantage, let alone as evidence of higher or lower efficiency or perhaps even democratic legitimacy. The very close and continuous cooperation between special librarian, "intern" scientist and highly qualified specialist generally to be found in special libraries, may be the reason for the greater degree of coverage of the literature processed, which can be observed there.

The "character of timelessness", the sometimes "museum-like" organization of the literary material, and the maintenance activities of classic-traditional universal libraries are pushed in the background in special libraries due to the predetermined "necessity" of providing the most up-to-date material available. With regard to their collections, special libraries frequently find it necessary to concentrate on such literary categories which the classical libraries disapproved of up to the most recent of times[8]. A large part of their literary material consists of publications which are not produced by publishing houses; it includes papers published by "corporate bodies" - such as administrative authorities, international bodies, supranational institutions etc. - ;furthermore, so-called "official publications", export opinions or commentaries, company papers, statistics, balance sheets, internal periodicals and other specialized material, etc.[9]. Monographs, on the other hand, play a relatively minor role here, probably because scientific information as a rule is being reflected by them only after a certain period of time. The actual scientific life is pulsating in the scientific periodicals, in official conference reports, incl. the papers and proceedings, in research reports and related papers. Special libraries are primarily under an obligation to deal with the present and the future; the coming to terms with the past is something that is done only as a side occupation, and then only sporadically mainly by such libraries which, on account of the uniqueness of their historical collections and because of their particular "areas of concentration" are performing the functions of archival libraries[10].

The specific characteristics of special libraries do, as a matter of fact, also apply largely to the libraries of the statistical offices, but nevertheless the latter distinguish themselves in some respects from the former: First of all, the characteristic "limitation of the area of concentration" is not fully, nor in the original meaning of the term, applicable to statistical libraries. In view of an increasing tendency to apply statistical approaches and methods in nearly all walks of life and research areas[11], the technical composition of the material stocks also of these installations is being orientated to the requirements of these special branches of science; for without knowledge of the scientific foundations of the respective specialities, it is neither possible to conceive statistical collection programmes nor to optimally perform statistical compilations, or to perform analyses and to apply methods in a purposeful way. Unlike the large universal libraries, librarians of the statistical libraries consequently cannot limit their work to a few special branches but must rather attend to a great number of subject matters; in this respect, they can however count on the ready cooperation of the experts in the particular divisions of their offices, as past experience has shown.

In addition to the broad technical spread of collections that is normal for this type of special statistical library, another characteristic is worth mentioning: the multilingualism of the stocks. The by now worldwide international exchange of experience practised by the statistical offices which, as far as Europe was concerned, had its beginning before the turn of the century leading to the founding of international institutions - as for instance the International Statistical Institute (ISI) in Holland - also contributed to activities in such international organizations as the League of Nations and the United Nations, in the latter body particularly in their subdivision "Conference of European Statisticians". The exchange of experience sought by statisticians in their early meetings way back in the past led, of necessity, to the idea of entering into a mutual exchange of the respective national publications of official statistics. The first - although internationally informal -

exchange agreement, which was initiated by Quetelet and agreed upon by the offices of 26 countries, goes back to the year 1853, i.e. it was formulated well over a century ago. By now, all libraries of national statistical offices are engaged in exchanging the printed results published by their Offices with the libraries of other nations with whom friendly relations are maintained. As far as the larger countries are concerned, this exchange programme may well embrace all nations which have a central statistical authority; the Library of the Federal Statistical Office of the Federal Republic of Germany, for instance, exchanges the publications of its Office with approximately 600 institutions in about 150 countries all over the world. Since these publications - Statistical Yearbook, Subject-Matter Series and other periodicals - include in the larger offices hundreds of titles as a rule, it is a rather voluminous bulk of exchange matter which is thus collected; as far as the Library of the Federal Statistical Office is concerned, this volume exceeds 100,000 individual publications per annum. Corresponding to the aforementioned characteristics with regard to the structure of the stocks and language, the result is a multiplicity of over 30 foreign languages and a structure of the material that is made up to more than 50 % by official publications of the relevant Offices.

Some further peculiarities to be pointed out as being typical of this type of library under historical or library-specific aspects relate to such subjects as acquisition of the material, inventories, bibliographies, growth acceleration, and the like. These had been dealt with in a paper written by the late head of the Library of the Federal Statistical Office, Mrs. L. Kaiser[12], to which special reference is made here.

2. Regarding the enquiry conducted with the national statistical libraries

A worldwide enquiry conducted among the national statistical libraries by means of an extensive questionnaire had the purpose of providing an insight into their present structures, their size, their personnel situation, their technical equipment and,

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if possible, also their financial position, their general and their specific activities, the (special) collections maintained for complementing the main concentrations of material, their growth rates, and the like. In addition to up-to-date information on the location of this type of library within the literary landscape, indications are expected for the question to be answered later, i.e. whether the already existing worldwide cooperation - especially as far as the exchange of literary material is concerned - could be extended step by step to a literary information system.

Complying with a suggestion put forth by the members of the section "Administrative Libraries" of the IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Insitutions), an enquiry was started early last year among the National Statistical Libraries, which was aimed in particular at those institutions with which the Federal Statistical Office of the Federal Republic of Germany maintains exchange relations and which are known or expected to possess a library. The delegates of the administrative libraries who are members of the international association were in agreement that the category "Statistical Libraries" was particularly suitable for the enquiry, because - as mentioned earlier - the National Statistical Libraries can look back on a close, worldwide cooperation, dating back at least to the postwar period, in part even much further than that. For this reason, it could be assumed that an endeavour of this magnitude, and in this sphere, not only met with ready support, but that also a certain homogeneity with regard to both the structure of stocks and the scope of objectives did exist, conditions which seem appropriate for facilitating the answering of questions in the questionnaire.

The questionnaire which, together with the explanations, is formulated in three languages (German, English and French), was mailed early in 1979, followed by a reminding letter in the spring of the same year. A further reminder was mailed in April of 1980. The first filled-in questionnaires were returned relatively early, while the last were only received in May of this year. Of the total number of libraries in 127 countries which were covered by the survey, 70 had replied up to the dead-

line of the enquiry, which represents a quota of returns of 55 %. By adding those exchange partner libraries from which pertinent data were available from an earlier survey which had been restricted to European libraries (1970), data thus are available from altogether 64 % of the libraries covered by the enquiry. The request of the IFLA sections "Administrative Libraries" and "Statistics" to report in this connection at this year's 46th Annual Conference of the Federation at Manila, will provide an opportunity to appeal to the respective national committees of IFLA for support in bringing about a completion of the survey.

The contents of the questionnaire - with the exception of a few modifications relating to the specific characteristics of statistical libraries - were developed in analogousness with that UNESCO draft questionnaire which on a number of occasions was the subject of detailed discussions within the circle of the IFLA "Section Statistics". Further suggestions were obtained from a questionnaire which had formed the basis for an enquiry in connection with the "World Dictionary of Administrative Libraries" of the IFLA Section "Administrative Libraries"[13].

In an attempt to sum up the quality of the returns, it can be generally stated that the quality of the answers stands in a direct correlation with the formal technical qualifications of the responding librarian, i.e. with his/her level of completed education. This is to say: good qualifications were more frequently found with larger than with smaller libraries. In contrast to this general observation, there is nevertheless in individual cases evidence of above-average expert knowledge - as far as such knowledge can be deduced from the quality of the returns - with librarians of smaller libraries; this however is mostly due to the fact that such librarians can look back on many years of practical experience in larger, efficiently managed library systems. With respect to those groups of questions where the answers most frequently led to misunderstandings, it will be necessary to supplement the explanations before or at the time of a subsequent follow-up enquiry, or perhaps to explain in greater

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detail and, if possible, complement them with practical examples. It obviously might also be expedient to add a Spanish version. With initial endeavours on such a scope, non-foreseeable shortcomings of whatever kind are almost the rule and should be tolerated. In our opinion, the merit of the survey as such remains however unaffected.

As far as the period of development of statistical libraries is concerned, it can be said as a result of the enquiry that almost 30 % - mostly those of European institutions - were founded before the end of the last century; 16 % of these libraries had their beginning between the turn of the century and the end of World War II. The main boom of new foundations arose in the postwar period: by far more than half of all libraries of statistical offices had their beginning within this period of time. This latter development was undoubtedly influenced by the process of decolonization and, respectively, the hereby touched-off foundation of new independent states. All national statistical libraries have a strictly administrative character in common, even where they officially perform the functions of national depository libraries[14]. In addition to their main areas of concentration, namely official statistical publications, literature on questions of statistical methodology, statistical theory, other avenues of applied statistics, as well as publications from such fields of science which make use of statistical methods[15], the libraries covered maintain extensive stocks of literary material relating to the fields of economics, sociology and demography, as well as mathematics, and literature referring to information science and data processing. The returns quite frequently indicate extensive card indexes.

The overall volume of stocks is considerable and can be compared with the volume of a larger national library: a computation of the data supplied shows as a result the availability of over four million individual volumes; by complementing these figures with the data of those libraries which have not responded to this date, but from which information is available from earlier surveys, an overall volume of over six million individual volumes must seem a reasonable assumption.

The largest statistical library is maintained by the Soviet Russian Central Statistical Office (Central 'noe Statisticeskoe Upravlenie pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR), which already ten years ago had over half a million volumes at its disposal (today this figure may well exceed 600,000 volumes); it is followed by the Belgian Library "Fonds Quetelet" with over 500,000 volumes (which however is not exclusively engaged with "statistical tasks", but also serves the staff of other authorities inter alia as a library/documentation center of the Ministry for Economic Affairs) and the Library of the Hungarian Statistical Office with a little less than half a million volumes (456,000).[16] The latter library has since 1897 functioned as the official national depository library (obligation to submit free copies) for printed Hungarian books and periodicals. These "Big Three" are followed by a group of libraries with stocks ranging between more than 200,000 and less than 400,000 individual volumes. In the sequence of their "size of stocks", these comprise the libraries of the following countries:[17] Poland (320,000), France (300,000), Japan (280,000), Netherlands (275,000), USA (245,000) and the Federal Republic of Germany (205,000). These 10 largest "National Statistical Libraries" shelter almost two-thirds of the total stocks available in all libraries of this type in the world. If one furthermore includes the library stocks of those Offices which range between 100,000 and 200,000 volumes - these concern the countries Switzerland (200,000), Czechoslovakia (150,000), Norway (140,000), Denmark (128,000), Austria (120,000), Finland (120,000), Italy (120,000), Yugoslavia (105,000) and Canada (100,000), that is to say by far exceeding one additional million volumes - ,then the statement is in order that one fifth of all libraries have at their disposal three fourths of the world stocks of the literature which altogether can be found in statistical libraries. Looking at the material of these libraries from the point of view of its geographical distribution, one becomes aware of a heavy preponderance in favour of Europe: 74 % of all stocks are kept there, 12 % are in Asia, 11 % in America and only 3 % of the overall volume can be found in African libraries.

The question relating to the "meters of shelving" has quite obviously been misunderstood by a rather large number of librarians, although it is one of the standard questions in the annual UNESCO library surveys, with data regularly being published in the "Statistical Yearbook"[18]. Nevertheless, this is a question which permits sufficiently precise estimates. By multiplying the number of individual volumes with the factor determined for the average width of the backs of books (3.5 cm), the result based on the assumed 6 million volumes amounts to a total of roughly 210,000 shelf meters (= 210 km).

The question referring to the extent of the stocks available almost a decade ago only had the purpose of testing the reliability of the data which relate to the growth of stocks during the year of return (control question). Still, the response revealed information indicating a growth rate of 10.5 % for the six-year period, which corresponded to an average annual growth rate of 1.8 %. The growth rates given for the year of return indicate a doubling of the average number of new publications received, which represents a growth rate of 4 %. A final opinion as to the reason for this "sudden explosion of growth" as well as regarding the question to what extent the data are reliable, can only be given after the results of an envisaged (because necessary) follow-up enquiry are available.

Worthy of notice are the answers to the questions regarding the number of current periodicals received on a subscription basis. The fact which emerged is that of the almost 100,000 periodicals subscribed to, only a quarter are, on the average, of domestic origin, which again indicates that according to the information provided, the quota of foreign periodicals amounts to 75 %. Since it is safe to assume that the "financial possibilities" of administrative libraries in general, and of statistical libraries in particular, are below normal and that it is generally understood that the financial means available for the acquisition of foreign periodicals are rather limited, the noteworthy 1:3 ratio of domestic to foreign literature in the form of periodical publications must be seen as an indication of the already mentioned extensive exchange efforts pursued by the national statistical libraries.

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The questions concerning "lending activities", "users", as well as "special services" are to provide information with regard to some essential library-specific activities. If one realizes that - in contrast to public libraries and also university libraries - the main emphasis of the activities of special libraries concentrates as a rule on the sector "special services" and, comparatively speaking, rather less on lending activities - as far as the latter can be measured at all as individual procedures - ,the scope of the "lendings" which is said to exceed a quarter million volumes per annum, must be regarded as large. In this connection, it must be pointed out that as far as the typical special libraries are concerned, in particular those of administrative authorities , it is frequently standing practice to make "lendings" to the staff of the parent institution not for short periods of time (see lending terms), but on a "permanent basis". This practice naturally reduces the "lending turnover" per unit, although the "degree of literary use" is probably as intensive as it is with other types of libraries. The "permanent lending practice" also has the positive side effect that the often prevailing shortage of shelf space in administrative libraries is thus relieved.[19) 20)]

The survey shows that "Statistical Libraries" are no longer not only available to the staff of their administrative authority, but that they mostly, i.e. in 78 % of the cases, also make their material accessible to the public. Approximately two thirds of the libraries (66 %) perform reprographic services and 86 % provide bibliographical information[21)].

Not more than close to 40 % of the libraries report that they participate in "International Lending Activities", while a good one-third answered in the affirmative with regard to the "Participation in Information Systems". A somewhat smaller number of libraries (33 %) offer newspaper clipping services; lists of newly-arrived publications are provided by the great majority (92 %) of institutions. A well-known library - which as far as personnel is concerned is by far in the, relatively

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speaking, most unfavourable position - compiles an internationally highly regarded bibliography on its country's literature on economics and sociology[22]. Almost all libraries (95 %) keep alphabetical catalogues. Those libraries which do not have this kind of catalogue, use in its place systematic or lexical catalogues. These subject matter-oriented kinds of catalogues are used, as far as the type "Systematic Catalogue" is concerned, in 84 % of cases and, as far as the type "Lexical Catalogue" is concerned, in 81 % of cases. In libraries using the latter, it is as a rule employed in addition to the SyK type. In addition to these mainly subject matter-oriented kinds of catalogues, there is also explicit mention made of some other systems, which however at closer scrutiny turn out to be subvarieties or particular versions of the SyK type - in one case as a lexical type of catalogue. The "catchword" or alphabetical subject catalogue is used by only one library.

The predominant catalogue form is the card-index which, with one exception, is employed by all libraries. In addition to catalogues in the form of card-indexes, some libraries also keep catalogues in book form; in one library, such a catalogue is the only one kept. Microforms (microfilms, microfiches and similar processes) have so far been made use of in only a few libraries; their use is envisaged however by a number of libraries.

With the exception of the Belgian library "Founds Quetelet", there is up to now no library which makes use of modern data carriers such as magnetic tapes and magnetic disks, a situation which in view of the great progress made in the application of electronic data processing by the statistical offices, is rather astonishing. In a number of libraries, however, plans are under way to make use of this modern technology - mainly as far as "documentation retrieval" is concerned - ,and there is one case, in which the introduction of such means is almost imminent.

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With regard to the (in the terminology of the UNESCO draft questionnaire) guidelines for the cataloguing (what we call cataloguing rules), more than half (56.5 %) of the respondents state that they apply the "ALA guidelines"; other cataloguing rules applied are the "Prussian Instructions" (4 %), while the rest make use of other rules, with many returns indicating that they are "rules of their own make" (e.g. Sweden, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia). In some libraries, the question was misinterpreted and it was stated that the decimal classification (DC), in one version or another, was in use. The questionnaire however did not ask for the classification used in the systematic catalogues. Obviously, however, there existed an urge to provide information in this connection. This need must be taken into account in the follow-up enquiry.

Most libraries (84 %) have reading-rooms at their disposal, which is of interest in view of the trend to open these libraries also to "outside-users"; only less than 40 % however make provisions for the lending of reading material. In other words, the "reading-room-only" or non-lending library is the predominant one.

The libraries which participated in the survey employ altogether almost 600 people; if one includes the large libraries (e.g. Soviet Russia) which have not responded to this date (from which earlier data are available however), the overall number of persons employed by the national statistical libraries may well amount to 1,000, of which 80 % are employed on a full-time basis.

A so far unexplained discrepancy with regard to the data supplied exists insofar as the figures for full-time and for part-time employees do not agree with the total number of employees reported, leaving a difference between the two totals of about 7.5 %. The clearing up of this discrepancy is one of the points that must be pursued at a later date.

Broken down by continents, it is revealed that almost half of the librarians (46 %) are employed in Europe, more than one third in America, 13.5 % in Asia and only 5.5 % in Africa.

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With regard to the level of completed education of librarians, a certain amount of the data provided on that subject cannot be accepted without a good deal of skepticism. Quite aside from the fact that here too, the figures given for the respective educational categories do not add up to an identical overall total (total employed = full-time and part-time employees), it is in particular the high percentage of "academics", representing 27.5 % of the total, which catches the eye. If one compares this ratio for instance with the figures ascertained by an enquiry performed by the Bundesrechnungshof (Federal Audit Office) of the Federal Republic of Germany among the libraries of "independent central federal authorities" which, as far as official staff allocation policies (manning tables) are concerned, are certainly not treated any worse than for instance the libraries in the developing countries, it is shown that the ascertained ratio of academically trained persons here amounts to 7.3 %, which is only one quarter of the respective ratio in the libraries covered by the survey. Since the results of our enquiry show on the one hand a relatively high degree of coverage, but on the other hand still reveal rather limited documentation activities, which latter could otherwise perhaps justify the fourfold higher ratio of "scientists", the reasons for this difference in the personnel structure are not easily understood. It seems most likely that the level of completed "library school" was equated with a completed university education, a trend which obviously also seems to gain a foothold in our own country, where the degree "Diplombibliothekar" (holder of a diploma) obtained from a vocational college, is occasionally passed around as an "academic degree[23)].

In the libraries of some developing countries, the staff - if one relies upon the answers to the questionnaire - consists predominantly of academically trained persons; in one case, the entire library personnel is said to consist of persons who hold an academic degree. From one of these countries we received the information - which still has to be verified - that for social reasons, all interested university graduates must by law be employed by the public service, which would lead to a situation where in the face of a lack of permanent established jobs, several

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persons frequently had to share individual positions and the salary that goes with it. This situation would force the "partial jobholders" to engage in "sideline activities". By including with the librarians who hold university degrees also those who have attained the level of completed advanced full-time vocational school, it can be said that nearly half the personnel working in statistical libraries has an educational level which entails a specific qualification. Almost a quarter of the personnel of libraries (24 %) obtain their training at their place of work, while 28 % of those employed are classified as unskilled workers. Measured against the ascertained annual growth rates and the size of stocks of some libraries, the personnel allocation appears to be rather inflated. Here too, the often mentioned "follow-up enquiry" may perhaps enlighten the scene.

The information requested with respect to the financial set-up are unfortunately still too incomplete as of this date in order to permit meaningful interpretations. We nevertheless hope that this initial attempt of describing and analysing this specific type of special library on the basis of empirically obtained values, has provided some rather interesting insights.

3. Outlook

What areas would - on the basis of the newly gained knowledge - be suitable for submitting suggestions with regard to a desired intensified cooperation between the individual units of this type of special library?

Proceeding on the assumption that the sectors "title registration" (formal coverage) and "Subject-matter coverage" (such as indexing, providing cross-references, and the like), and perhaps also the "bibliographical information service" (as far as this service is not slowly losing its importance in the more distant future on account of developments in "documentation retrieval") belong to the most labour-intensive and expensive fields of work, any cooperation aiming at economizing policies will have to start with a revision of these spheres of operation.

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In the past (and quite probable still in the present time), the prevailing procedure was to carry out the work processes in each individual library in an isolated manner, so that a literary unit was as a rule processed as often on an individual and isolated basis as there were libraries which acquired it.

To the extent that one became aware of this wastefulness inherent in the traditional method, procedures were developed which could prevent the "inefficient"multiplication of essentially equal work operations. Provided there is the necessary cooperation between libraries, this can be accomplished by having all necessary procedures (coverage activities) performed only once in one library, and then have the results made available to all other libraries participating in the scheme.

The basic idea of a cooperative, work-saving arrangement is by no means new; even before such considerations were taken up by the library sector, official statistics in the Federal Republic of Germany (Federal Statistical Office and Land Statistical Offices) for instance practiced the so-called "Interlocking Programming", ("Verbundprogrammierung") a procedure which in fact led to the result that equal work operations had to be performed only once; this, however, was of necessity based on agreements which guaranteed a relatively equal distribution of burdens.

As far as the library sector is concerned, there is an actual awareness of procedures which could lead to a reduction of (individual) title registration activities, as for instance the "magnetic tape services" of the Deutsche Bibliothek or the interlocking library system of the USA. Still, the work-sharing cooperation between equivalent library partners is - in spite of the advantages - practiced on too small a scale.

We see on the one hand that the statistical libraries, as far as the exchange of publications is concerned, have practiced for decades a close cooperation, while on the other hand, namely as far as cataloguing and documentation activities

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are concerned, they still work in complete isolation and, accordingly, uneconomical. This is all the more regrettable, because the conditions for more cooperation are particularly favourable for this type of special library, the reason being that the areas covered, are, in contrast to universal or large university libraries, relatively homogenous.

Due to the personal contacts existing between the librarians, the conditions relating to staff could, in spite of the world-wide scope, hardly be more favourable.

The realization of such a cooperation with respect to making relevant literature accessible (both formally as well as materially) naturally implies the existence of a certain amount of "standardization" as far as the title registration procedures (rules) are concerned. Our enquiry has revealed that these conditions do already in part exist, for nearly 50 % of all libraries employ the ALA rules for the registration of titles. The German rules (RAK) are admittedly not identical with these Anglo-American instructions, but a certain relationship can hardly be denied. Also the "rules of their own make" which individual libraries frequently gave as an answer to our survey, are mostly based on the "principle of mechanical sequence of words". This fact gives us reason to believe that the necessary "agreement on norms" may represent a difficult, but by no means insoluble problem. This optimistic outlook is also supported by the fact that the specific regional distribution of libraries, with its main concentration in Europe, should facilitate the realization of this objective.

A solution of problems of headings-formulation/determination - e.g. analogous to the RAK rules (§ 24) - resulting from the multiplicity of languages, is confronted just as much with technical as with political obstacles. Preparatory work of the IFLA[24] should prove to be particularly useful here. Multilingual thesauri, subject heading lists and the alike are already available for specialized branches, which are being developed for the field of statistics too, help to solve questions arising from language barriers especially in the field of indexing.

The possibility of performing the registration of titles by means of standardized data gathering patterns which could also include documentation aspects, will also have to be considered in this context.

The exchange of such standardized literary information could, for the time being, still function in conventional forms (international catalogue card system, lists, extension of imprints by including abbreviated titles, and the like), but it could also, as far as the necessary prerequisites do exist, be accomplished with the help of microforms or by means of data carriers. While the standardization in the sphere of microforms has progressed to a point where an early realization of information exchange programmes via these "data carriers" can be envisaged, the by far more complicated exchange via the data carriers magnetic tape/disc must still be the subject of extensive discussions, although there exist "conventions" in the form of MARC and MAB, and similar agreements.

The IFLA section "Administrative Libraries" should be a suitable forum for holding the necessary discussions with good prospects of success.

Footnotes to:

Hans K. Kullmer
The Libraries of the National Statistical Offices
in the World

- Comments on the results of an enquiry -

1) For the purposes of our survey, we hereby refer to the libraries of those institutions which take care of the central tasks of official statistics. These are either the central statistical offices (such as the Federal Statistical Office of the Federal Republic of Germany), or in countries with a decentralized organization those institutions, departments, etc., which take care of central statistical tasks for their respective sphere of competence (in Great Britain, for example, the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys is, among other things, responsible for population censuses, the Department of Trade and Industry looks after the economic data, and the Central Office of Statistics takes care of statistics in the social fields). In view of its historical importance, the Library of the Royal Statistical Library was also included in the survey. Other statistical libraries, among them some fairly large ones, were left out of this enquiry for the sake of expediency, but should also be covered at a later date. The libraries which were not taken into account by this survey were those of international and supranational authorities, also the libraries of the Land Statistical Offices in the Federal Republic of Germany, the libraries of larger municipal statistical offices as well as of statistical university institutions, and similar establishments.

We take this opportunity to thank all librarians who went to the trouble of completing the altogether rather copious questionnaire. We hope that the now available first evaluation of results will provide some helpful and interesting information to the librarians who participated in the survey.

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2) As regards further particulars we refer to:

Norbert Fischer: Die Spezialbibliotheken.

in: Handbuch der Bibliothekswissenschaft, Bd 2.
(Hrsg.) Georg Leyh, Wiesbaden (Harrassowitz) 1961, pp 556

further:

Frieda Otto: Entwicklung der sozialwissenschaftlichen Spezialbibliotheken.

in: Bericht über die 10. Tagung in Düsseldorf
(der) Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Spezialbibliotheken
31.03.-2.04.1965.- Kiel 1966, pp 137

Frieda Otto: Die Spezialbibliothek als Grundlage sozialwissenschaftlicher Forschung.

in: Bericht über die 9. Tagung (der) Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Spezialbibliotheken in München, 7.-9.03.1963.- Braunschweig 1964, pp 74

Frieda Otto: "Spezialbibliotheken und Bibliotheksplan 1973. Material für die Podiumsdiskussion zum Thema "Bibliotheksplan und Bibliothekspolitik. Zur Realisierung des Bibliotheksplans" anlässl.d. Bibliothekskongresses 1973 in Hamburg am 14. Juni 1973."

in: Bericht über die 14. Tagung (der) Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Spezialbibliotheken in Hamburg 12.-16. Juni 1973.- Berlin 1974, pp 9

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3) Wilfred Ashworth: Special librarianship.
London (Bingley) and München, New York,
Paris (Saur) 1979, pp 5

22(24)

4) Johan van Halm: The Development of Special Libraries as an International Phenomenon (SLA state-of-the-art review Nr. 4)
New York (Special Libraries Association) 1978, pp 6

also "Statistical Yearbook" of the UNESCO, part 10.

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5) As to the concept of "administrative libraries" see:

Otto Simmler (Hrsg.) World Directory of Administrative Libraries.
München (Verlag Dokumentation now Saur) 1976, pp 27

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6) See also

Gisela von Busse: Struktur und Organisation des wissenschaftlichen Bibliothekswesens in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Entwicklung von 1945 bis 1975. Wiesbaden (Harrassowitz) 1977.

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7) Compare

Lisa Kaiser: Zentrale Statistische Bibliotheken in Europa.

in: Zeitschrift für Bibliothekswesen und Bibliographie, Bd 18 (1971) Heft 2, pp 97

also the literature cited there.

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8) See Fischer, loc. cit.

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9) For further information see

"Amtsdruckschriften" by Hildegard Ey and Elisabeth Möllendorf

in: Festschrift aus Anlaß des 25. Jahrestages der Gründung der Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Parlaments- und Behördenbibliotheken, München (Verlag Saur), 1980.

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10) As regards further particulars we again refer to Fischer, loc. cit.

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11) From the "Catalogue of Statistics" which is contained in the publication "Das Arbeitsgebiet der Bundesstatistik" (Survey of German Federal Statistics), edition 1976, published by the Federal Statistical Office of the Federal Republic of Germany, the following individual subject fields can be derived:

Demography, Geography, Medicine, Education and Culture, Justice, Economic and Social Sciences, Finance and Taxes, Technology, Engineering Sciences, Mathematics, Information Science in Physics, Chemistry .....

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12) Comp. Kaiser, loc. cit.

It is our deeply felt wish to take this opportunity of cordially thanking all those librarians who have contributed to the reorganization of the Library of the Federal Statistical Office by their donations of literary documents. Almost the entire collection of valuable literature published by the former "Reich Statistical Office" is today available again in our Library as good as complete. This was made possible by the good offices and generous support of sister libraries in Denmark, France, Iceland, Canada, Sweden, Switzerland, Finland, United Kingdom, Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

For generous donations, we are also obliged to the Library of the United Nations in Geneva and to the International Statistical Institute. We are furthermore indebted to numerous other libraries and individual persons for donating individual documents to our Library.

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13) This questionnaire is included with Enclosure 1, the relevant comments with Enclosure 2. Enclosure 3 contains a tabulated summary of answers subdivided by countries. As far as it is not explicitly stated otherwise, all data refer to the year 1978, excepting the Federal Statistical

Office whose data refer to the year 1979. The information provided concerns in general only those libraries which responded to the respective question.

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14) The Library of the Central Statistical Office of Hungary has since 1897 acted in the official capacity as depository library for all books and periodicals printed in the Hungarian language.

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15) See footnote no. 11)

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16) See footnote no. 14)

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17) All figures are rounded off. As far as France and the Soviet Union are concerned, the only data at present available relate to the year 1970. Percentage figures refer to the libraries only which answered the respective question.

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18) In one case, the number of meters indicated was greater than the number of volumes available, which would mean that more than one meter of shelving was available for each and every volume. Such generous storage capacities seem unrealistic.

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19) As far as the Library of the Federal Statistical Office is concerned, more than one third of all stocks are permanently lent out. The sudden return of all these volumes would lead to a complete breakdown of storage facilities.

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20) The question referring on the one hand to orders/requests "received" and, on the other, to orders/requests "complied with", has obviously been misunderstood by a number of libraries. How else could one explain answers indicating more orders/requests "complied with" than orders/requests "received". This discrepancy must also be cleared up by the "follow-up enquiry".

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21) The libraries which indicate that they do not perform these services are mostly small units which do not have a sufficiently qualifiedstaff. Among them, however, is also one larger library, in which case the respective answers could also be due to a misunderstanding.

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22) This refers to the Library of the Federal Statistical Office of Switzerland. It is a mystery to us how the work volume indicated can be accomplished with the number of personnel mentioned in the return.

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23) For this aspect see

Gerhard Lohse: Zur Personalstruktur des bibliothekarischen Berufes.

in: Mitteilungsblatt des Verbandes der Bibliotheken des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, Neue Folge Jahrgang 24, Juni 1974, pp 113